



Your Guide to the Wondrous Diversity of the Smokies

One hundred and fifty trails extend for approximately 800 miles, crossing the ridges, peaks, and valleys of America's most visited national park.

For those seeking more information, a variety of topographic maps and trail guides are available, including *Hiking Trails of the Smokies*, the comprehensive park trail guidebook. To order a map or guide, call (865) 436-7318 x226 or visit www.SmokiesInformation.org.



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Using the Chart at Right

Backcountry campsites and shelters are listed by map coordinates (7E, etc.), with their elevations in feet. Backcountry campsites are numbered and grouped by the major access areas. All sites and shelters are available to hikers, but camping with horses and other



NPS PHOTOGRAPH



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In emergencies call: Park headquarters, 865-436-9171; Cherokee (NC) police, 828-497-4131; or Gatlinburg (TN) police, 865-436-5181.

- Do not leave valuables in sight inside your car. Do not leave a note on your car indicating how long you will be hiking. Protect your valuables by taking them with you or hiding them in your car.

Leave No Trace

Your personal commitment to ethical backcountry use is the most important factor in maintaining the park's wilderness character. Take pride in leaving no trace of your presence here.

- Abide by all backcountry use regulations. They are designed for resource protection.
- Use a stove and candle lantern to minimize the trampling and destruction of vegetation that result from collecting firewood.
- Never cook or burn food in a campfire. A residue and odor will remain and will attract wildlife that will become a problem for future campers.
- Keep your group small to preserve a sense of solitude.
- Camp where your campsite already shows impacts. Don't establish new tent sites.
- Pack out all leftover food and trash.
- Avoid cutting across switchbacks, to prevent destructive trail erosion.

If You Get Lost

Stay calm, do not leave the trail and do not travel at night. Prevent getting lost by keeping your group together, staying on the trail, and using a map. Let someone know your schedule and travel plans, so they can notify park authorities if you are overdue.

Toilet Use

Improper human waste disposal creates one of the most disgusting conditions in the backcountry. Regulations require that human feces be deposited in a six-inch-deep hole and covered with soil and that no toilet use occur within 100 feet of a camp or water source or within sight of a trail. Defecating behind a shelter or near a spring creates very unhealthy conditions and is clearly bad manners. All sanitary napkins and tampons must be packed out. Do not bury them. Please, take a little extra care!

Into the Wild: Visiting the Smokies Backcountry

If Someone Gets Injured

If someone is injured and can't be moved to a trailhead, do the following: Provide warmth and comfort; leave someone with the injured person; note the exact location and circumstances; and hike out and let rescuers know where to go and what to prepare for. It is *your* responsibility to make sure you don't get injured. Be careful and use common sense. Getting accident victims out of the backcountry is difficult and often dangerous for all involved.

There are no cellular phone towers in the park so cell phones do not work from most locations. The tops of high ridges near the park boundary are the most likely spots for reception. For emergencies only, call 911 or (865) 436-9171.

Hazards!

Wind. High winds associated with approaching weather fronts can bring down trees and limbs on heavily forested trails. Plan accordingly.

Hypothermia. Hypothermia is when body temperature falls below the point at which the body can maintain its own heat. It is an all-season killer and results from exposure to a combination of wind, rain, and cold. At higher elevations, a wet hiker can succumb to hypothermia in mid-summer. Be prepared for sudden weather changes—and learn how to take care of yourself in extremes of cold, heat, and wetness. Always carry raingear; storms arise quickly. Hypothermia symptoms can appear very rapidly, even in mild weather.

Know its symptoms and treat them immediately: uncontrolled shivering, slurred speech, memory lapses, stumbling, fumbling hands, drowsiness, and the inability to get up after a nap. Victims need dry clothing, warm fluids if conscious, and shelter from the elements. To prevent hypothermia, drink before thirsty, eat before hungry, rest before tired, and stay dry. Travel and stay with a companion. Two people can look after each other better than one can look after oneself! Clothing should be worn in layers, an outer layer to ward off wind and precipitation and inner layers to insulate. Keep your head warm and dry with a good hat. Other cold weather hazards include frostbite, icy trails, and deep snow.

Stream crossings and waterfalls. Rain swollen streams can be unsafe to ford. Don't cross a stream unless you are sure you can make it. As an additional precaution, make sure your pack can be discarded quickly, wear shoes to protect your feet, use a stout stick for extra support, and, if you lose your footing, float with your feet downstream to

protect your head. Walking near a stream on moss- and spray-covered rocks can be hazardous. **Never camp next to a stream swollen by high water.** Waterfalls can be extremely hazardous; climbing on them has resulted in many fatalities.

Drinking water. All water obtained in the backcountry should be treated before drinking to protect you from health hazards. **The recommended treatment is to boil it for one minute.** Many park waters are clear, cold, and free-running. Nevertheless, they may not be safe to drink unless boiled. Filters may not remove certain bacteria or viruses, and chemical disinfectants require very long contact times for the water temperatures found in these mountains. **Do not drink untreated water!**

Special Equipment Concerns

Clothing. The one essential piece of equipment for hiking in the Smokies is a rain jacket. Bring it along even on sunny days when there's not a cloud in the forecast. Sooner or later you'll be thankful you did.

If hiking in the high country between September and May, always carry warm clothing, including hat and gloves.

Foot Wear. Truly water-proof boots can be a big plus in the Smokies. Not only will they keep your feet drier during rainy weather, they also give you a little extra assistance when crossing shallow streams.

Crampons. Small, clip-on crampons can be very helpful when hiking high elevation trails during cold weather.

Bears and You!

Bears in the park are wild, and their behavior is unpredictable. Attacks on humans are extremely rare, *but they have happened, inflicting serious injuries and death.* Treat bear encounters with

extreme caution and follow the guidelines below.

Encounters along the trail. Stay alert. If you see a bear at a distance, do not approach it. If your presence causes the bear to change its behavior (it stops feeding, changes travel direction, watches you, etc.)—YOU'RE TOO CLOSE. Being too close may also promote aggressive behavior from the bear, like running toward you, making loud noises, or swatting the ground. The bear is demanding more space. Don't run but slowly back away, watching the bear. Try to increase the distance between you and the bear, and the bear will probably do the same. If a bear persistently follows or approaches you, typically **without** vocalizing or paw swatting, try changing your direction. If the bear continues to follow you, stand your ground. If the bear gets closer, talk loudly or shout at it. Act aggressively and try to intimidate the bear. Act together as a group if you have companions. Make yourselves look as large as possible (for example, move to higher ground). Throw non-food items like rocks at the bear. Use a deterrent like a stout stick. Don't run and don't turn away from the bear. Don't leave food for the bear; this only encourages further problems.

Most injuries from black bear attacks are minor and result from the bear trying to get at people's food. If the bear's behavior shows that it is after your food, and you are physically attacked, separate yourself from the food and slowly back away. If the bear shows no interest in your food, and you are physically attacked, fight back aggressively with any available object—the bear may consider you prey! Help protect others: report all bear incidents to a park ranger immediately. Above all, keep your distance from bears!

Encounters in camp. The best way to avoid bears is not to attract them to you. Keep your cooking and sleeping areas

separate. Keep tents and sleeping bags free of food odors; do not store food, garbage, or other attractants (like toothpaste, soap, etc.) in them. A clean camp is essential to reducing problems. Pack out all food and litter; don't bury it or try to burn anything.

Regulations require proper food storage. Secure all food and other attractants at night or when not in use. Where food storage devices are present, use them. Otherwise, place all odorous items in your pack. Select two trees, 10-20 feet apart, with limbs 15 feet high. Using a rock for a weight, toss a rope over a limb on the first tree; tie one end to the pack. Repeat this process with the second tree. Raise the pack about six feet via the first rope and tie it off. Then pull the second rope until the pack is suspended at least 10 feet high and evenly spaced; it must be four feet or more from the nearest limb.

Camping Permits

Beginning in early 2013, the National Park Service will initiate a new backcountry reservation system that will allow backcountry campers to reserve backcountry sites and print permits online at any time of day or night. The new system will also reduce overcrowding at popular sites and provide for better trip planning assistance at the park backcountry office. There will be a nominal per person, per night fee for all backcountry campers. To find out if the new system has been initiated (or to read requirements for the old system), visit www.nps.gov/grsm or call (865) 436-1297.

Reservations may be made up to one month prior to the first day of the trip. For example, if you wish to backpack on August 8-12, you may make a reservation on July 8 to reserve space for the entire trip.

When the new system is initiated, reservations and permits will be available online 24/7. Visit www.nps.gov/grsm for the link. Reservations can also be made in person or by telephone at the backcountry office in Sugarlands Visitor Center located two miles south of Gatlinburg, TN on U.S. 441 (Newfound Gap Road). The backcountry office phone number is (865) 436-1231.

You cannot stay two nights in a row in the same shelter. The maximum stay at a campsite is three consecutive nights. Using a tent at any shelter is prohibited. The maximum group size is eight persons, except at the following campsites where a party of twelve is permitted by reservation only: 17, 20, 46, 60, 86, and 90. Pets are prohibited in the backcountry.

Under Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, failure to abide by park

regulations may result in a fine or imprisonment.

Planning Your Trip

For a safe and enjoyable backpacking experience, know your limitations. A maximum trip length of eight to 10 miles a day is recommended. Group size, elevation gain, weather, and availability of good water may also affect the success of your trip.

The following equipment is considered essential for a safe backpacking trip: two flashlights, water, raingear, comfortable ankle-supporting shoes, high-energy food, and extra clothing. Always carry a map and know how to use it.

Rules and Regulations

- 1 You must possess a backcountry permit while camping in the backcountry.
- 2 Camping is permitted only at designated sites and shelters. Under the new reservation system (projected for early 2013) all sites will require advance reservations and a nominal per person, per night fee will be charged.
- 3 You may stay up to three consecutive nights at a campsite. You may not stay two nights in a row at a shelter.
- 5 Maximum camping-party size is eight persons. Exceptions at selected campsites are mentioned above.
- 6 Open fires are prohibited except at designated sites. Use only wood that is dead and on the ground. Use only established fire rings.
- 7 Use of tents at shelters is prohibited.
- 8 Food storage: When not being consumed or transported, all food and trash must be suspended at least 10 feet off the ground and four feet from the nearest limb or trunk or shall be stored as otherwise designated. See **Bears and You!**
- 9 Toilet use must be at least 100 feet from a campsite or water source and out of sight of the trail. Human feces must be buried in a six-inch-deep hole. See **Toilet Use.**
- 10 All trash must be carried out.
- 11 All plants, wildlife, and natural and historic features are protected by law. Do not carve, deface, or cut any standing trees or shrubs.
- 12 Polluting park waters is prohibited; do not wash dishes or bathe with soap in a stream.
- 13 Pets, motorized vehicles, and bicycles are not permitted in the backcountry.
- 14 Hunting is prohibited.
- 15 Feeding or harassing any wildlife is prohibited.

Horse Use

Horses and other pack animals (i.e. mules and llamas) are permitted in the park, but they are restricted to trails

specifically designated for horse use (see *map on other side*). Many horse trails are very steep and narrow—a challenge for even the most experienced horse and rider. Remoteness and difficulty of access often make continual trail clearing and care impractical. Expect to encounter rugged conditions. Please report down trees or landslides to a ranger. Off-trail or cross-country use is prohibited. Horse parties may use designated campsites open to their use (see *chart*). Horse parties are subject to all backcountry regulations.

Requirements: Horse parties must obtain a backcountry camping permit and reservation for any overnight backcountry camping. Horses must be under physical control at all times; they may not be left to water unattended; grazing is prohibited. All food for stock must be packed in, and unused food must be packed out. At designated backcountry sites where stock are permitted, the number of animals in any one party is limited to one per person plus one pack animal per person, but shall not exceed a total of ten (10) animals for the same group or the stock capacity for that site. See chart at right.

In campsites with no hitch posts or racks, horses must be cross-tied so that they cannot chew on or otherwise damage trees or other vegetation. Tying horses directly to trees is prohibited.

Horses are not permitted within 100 feet of trail shelters or in cooking or sleeping areas of campsites. Their manure must be scattered away from the campsite. Horses must not be tied closer than 100 feet to any stream or water source.

- Carry and use a collapsible bucket to water your horse—keep horses away from springs. • Never leave feed where wildlife can get to it—wildlife attracted to feed can come into conflict with people. • Use processed feed to eliminate introducing weed seeds into the park—hay may contain seeds of exotic plants, and some non-native plants can take over the habitat of native plants.

Auto-access Horse Camps

Limited auto-access horse camps provide ready access to backcountry trails from April through October. Reservations are required and may be made up to five months in advance. For reservations call **1-877-444-6777** between 10 a.m. and 10 p.m. eastern time or visit www.recreation.gov.

Auto-access Horse Camp	No. of Campsites
Anthony Creek	3
Big Creek	5
Cataloochee	7
Round Bottom	5
Tow String	2

Backcountry Campsites

Site No.	Capacity	Elev. (Feet)	Map Key
Cades Cove Area			
1 Cooper Road (12)	1200	2D	
2 Cane Creek (4)	1320	2D	
3 Hesse Creek (8, 2H)	1360	3D	
5 Rich Mountain (4, 2H)	3400	3D	
6 Turkeypen Ridge (8)	3400	4D	
9 Anthony Creek (12)	3200	4E	
10 Ledbetter Ridge (8)	3000	4E	
11 Beard Cane (6)	1530	2D	
12 Forge Creek (12)	2600	3E	
13 Sheep Pen Gap (15, 8H)	4640	2F	
14 Flint Gap (8)	2050	2E	
15 Rabbit Creek (12)	1550	2E	
16 Scott Gap (10)	1700	2E	
17 Little Bottoms (14)	1240	2D	

Elkmont/Tremont Area			
18 West Prong (12)	1600	4D	
19 Upper Henderson (8, 2H)	2880	5D	
20 King Branch (12, 4H)	2520	5D	
21 Mile 53 (12)	2640	6D	
23 Camp Creek (12)	3200	6D	
24 Rough Creek (15)	2860	6D	
26 Dripping Spring Mountain (10)	4400	6D	
27 Lower Jakes Gap (12, 2H)	3520	5D	
28 Marks Cove (12, 6H)	3490	5D	
30 Three Forks (12)	3400	6E	

Greenbrier/Cosby Area			
29 Ottercreek (10)	4560	10B	
31 Porter's Flat (8)	3400	8D	
32 Injun Creek (8)	2280	8C	
33 Settlers Camp (8)	1960	9B	
34 Sugar Cove (10)	3240	10B	
35 Gilliland Creek (12, 4H)	2680	10B	

Cataloochee/Big Creek Area			
36 Upper Walnut Bottom (20, 20H)	3040	11C	
37 Lower Walnut Bottom (20)	3000	11C	
38 Mount Sterling (12)	5820	11C	
39 Pretty Hollow (20, 10H)	3040	11D	
40 Big Hemlock (8)	3100	11D	
41 Caldwell Fork (12, 6H)	3360	11E	
42 Spruce Mountain (4)	5480	10D	

Oconaluftee Area			
44 McGee Spring (12, 4H)	5040	10D	
47 Enloe Creek (8)	3620	10D	
48 Upper Chasteen (8)	3320	9D	
49 Cabin Flats (12, 8H)	3060	9D	
50 Lower Chasteen Creek (15, 6H)	2360	9E	

Deep Creek Area			
46 Estes Branch (12)	2870	8F	
51 Georges Branch (12)	2800	8F	
52 Newton Bald (8, 2H)	5000	8E	
53 Poke Patch (6)	3000	8E	
54 Nettie Creek (6)	2600	8E	
55 Pole Road (15, 15H)	2410	8E	
56 Burnt Spruce (6)	2405	8F	
57 Bryson Place (10, 10H)	2360	8F	
58 Nicks Nest Branch (6)	2360	8F	
59 McCracken Branch (10)	2320	7F	
60 Bumgardner Branch (20, 4H)	2120	7F	

Noland Creek Area			
61 Bald Creek (10, 6H)	3560	7E	
62 Upper Ripshin (8, 6H)	3160	7F	
63 Jerry Flats (8, 6H)	2920	7F	
64 Mill Creek (12, 10H)	2540	7F	
65 Bear Pen Branch (8)	2040	6F	
66 Lower Noland Creek (Boats Only) (4)	1720	6G	
67 Goldmine Branch (6)	1840	6G	

Forney Creek Area			
68 Steeltrap (8)	3960	6E	
69 Huggins (8)	2800	6F	
70 Jonas Creek (12, 8H)	2400	6F	
71 CCC (12, 12H)	2180	6F	
74 Lower Forney (12, 8H)	1720	6G	
75 Poplar Flats (8)	2800	5F	

Hazel Creek Area			
82 Calhoun (8, 4H)	2720	5F	
83 Bone Valley (20, 10H)	2280	5F	
84 Sugar Fork (6)	2160	4F	
85 Sawdust Pile (10, 6H)	2000	4F	
86 Proctor (20, 8H)	1680	4F	
88 Possum Hollow (12)	1960	4F	

Twentymile Area			
89 Lower Ekanettelee (8)	1880	4F	
90 Lost Cove (12, 6H)	1760	3F	
91 Upper Lost Cove (4)	2040	3F	
92 Upper Flats (10, 6H)	2520	3F	
93 Twentymile Creek (8)	1880	3F	
95 Dalton Branch (12, 6H)	2360	2F	
96 Eagle Creek Island (8)	2880	4F	
97 Big Walnut (8)	2400	4E	
113 Birch Spring Gap (12, 6H)	3680	3F	

Lakeshore Area			
87 Jerry Hollow (Boats only) (6)	1720	3G	
72 Gunter Branch (Boats only) (6)	1720	6G	
73 Lone Pine (Boats only) (6)	1720	6G	
76 Kirkland Creek (6)	1770	5G	
77 Pilkey Creek (12, 6H)	1800	5G	
78 Double Island (Boats only) (6)	1720	5G	
81 North Shore (12, 6H)	1800	4G	
98 Chambers Creek (12, 6H)	1720	5G	

Shelters

Davenport Gap (12, 12H)	2600	11B
Cosby Knob (12, 12H)	4700	10C
Tricorner Knob (12, 12H)	5920	10C
Pecks Corner (12, 12H)	5280	9D
Leewater Spring (12)	5920	8D
Mount Collins (12)	5870	7E
Double Spring Gap (12)	5507	6E
Silers Bald (12, 12H)	5460	6E
Derrick Knob (12)	4890	5E
Spence Field (12, 12H)	4900	4E
Russell Field (14, 12H)	4360	4E
Mollies Ridge (12, 12H)	4570	3E
Mount Le Conte (12)	6440	7D
Kephart (14, 12H)	3900	8D
Laurel Gap (14, 12H)	5600	10D